Skills for life online

This exemplar is relevant to Digital Student challenge:

Prepare and support students to study successfully with digital technologies

Being Digital: Skills for life online is an interactive resource developed by the Open University. Rather than a linear course it offers a set of 40 distinct activities – examples include scanning a web page, using twitter, and referencing web sites – which take around 10 minutes each to complete. Students can browse for activities that meet their immediate needs or they can follow one of several 'pathways'. Activities can also be explored within four themes – Finding information, Using information, Creating information, and Workplace skills – which map loosely to the OU's Digital and Information Literacy Framework.

The resources are flexible enough to have been used by OU undergraduate students and prospective students, by 6th form students preparing for university study, by returning PhD students, and by staff in professional development. A growing number of OU qualifications now incorporate *Being Digital* activities, with the 'referencing' pathway compulsory across all Access modules. For Science, Law and MBA students activities are integrated at qualification level, while third level Social Science students use *Being Digital* to support a general skills audit. Activities have even been used to illustrate the principles of writing e-learning materials to Masters students in Library and Information studies.

Being Digital has won three awards since it was launched in 2012, most recently an OU Teaching Award for excellence in developing students' academic and learning skills. Evaluation carried out in 2013 showed that 92.5% of students found the activities to be very or quite useful in their studies, and a large proportion also found them useful for life beyond study. Feedback from students included the following:

- *'Brilliant for anyone new to the digital world or as a reminder for those who are more adept.'*
- *'Great collection of valuable advice and activities to enhance and protect our digital lives.'*
- *'Even the silver surfer would find it useful and easy to do. Broken down into bite-sized chunks makes it digestible.'*

How does this meet the challenge?
- The materials are flexible enough to be embedded into courses of study, used as pre-course preparation, or used free-standing.
- Having the materials openly available showcases the expertise of the team who created them and reassures students about the quality of support they will receive on course.
- The materials are award-winning for a reason: well designed, easy to use, and with interactivity built in.

Find out more

- [Being Digital resources](#)

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